

PARC NATUREL RÉGIONAL DES CAPS ET MARAIS D'OPALE

WIRWIGNES : THE HAUTE FAUDE FOOTPATH



Welcome to Wirwignes and the Haute Faude footpath in the heart of the Boulonnais countryside.

The footpath takes its name from the stream, the Faude, which you will cross twice. This trail has been created by Wirwignes town council and the Parc naturel régional des Caps et Marais d'Opale for the enjoyment of the local population and other walkers. The man-made "bocage" scenery of cultivated fields and hedgerows is emblematic of the Caps et Marais d'Opale landscapes.

The Haute-Faude trail is a Cross-Channel Geopark site of particular geological importance. This walk, suitable for families, provides an opportunity to discover our varied landscapes, local plant and wildlife, as well as the rural crafts that reflect our chalk geology.



CROSS-CHANNEL
GEOPARK
TRANSMANCHE

FORESTS

The transition zone between the forests and the fields is alive with many species of plants and animals which thrive in the fields, hedgerows and woodlands.

Nestling between two forested areas, Boulogne and Desvres, the village of Wirwignes is a corridor for these species which move between the two forests under the shelter of the hedgerows.

The regional natural park supports local farmers who wish to preserve, maintain, or plant new hedges.

SPECIES



COMMON DORMOUSE



EURASIAN NUTHATCH



APACHE SPIKETAIL

WOOD ENERGY

The bocage and its hedgerows are more than just a feature of the agricultural landscape. In the past, they would provide all the wood needed to construct and heat a farmhouse. And to promote the wood cut from the hedgerows, local farmers have set up an outlet for bocage wood chips, to supply the region's heating systems. In Wirwignes, this local and renewable energy is used to heat six buildings via an underground network of pipes (town hall, school, library, village hall and two homes for council workers).

Wood energy also enters into the sustainable management of the state-owned forest of Boulogne by the ONF (Office National des Forêts). With a special focus on ash trees affected by dieback due to a fungus, their crowns are cropped to make wood chips.



8KM
2H

YOU
ARE HERE

THE BOCACHE, A LIVESTOCK FARMING REGION

The Boulonnais bocage forms an agricultural landscape chiefly used for cattle-breeding. Here in Wirwignes, as you walk you will also see herds of Boulonnais sheep grazing in the fields and orchards. They belong to a very old breed found along the North Sea and English Channel coastline and which almost disappeared in the 1980s.

To save this breed from extinction, local farmers have joined forces to promote and sell the meat of these animals, with the support of the Centre Régional des Ressources Génétiques and the Parc naturel régional.

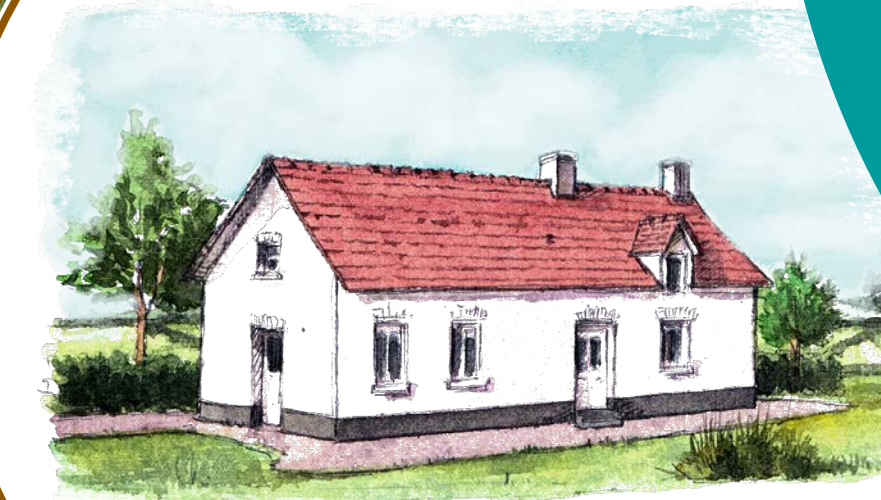


ARCHITECTURE AND GEOLOGY

During your walk, look out for the older houses and farms of Wirwignes. Their architecture has been determined by the region's geology. They were built using local sandstone, while the architraves around the windows and doors are made of softer Marquise stone. Both materials date back to the Jurassic era (almost 150 million years ago) and have been widely used, the region's geology offering an abundant supply of these resources.

In Wirwignes, you will also see houses made of cob (a mixture of earth, stone, wood and straw) and others made of locally manufactured bricks.

Note that the roofs are also tiled with tiles typical to the region, and locally made using clay from the small sand and sandstone quarries to be found in the lower regions of the Boulonnais.



Included in the Boulonnais bocage landscape plan, this information board was erected as part of the European USAC project (UNESCO Sites Across the Channel)



Direction régionale de l'environnement,
de l'aménagement et du logement

